

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF
Regular Meeting of January 11, 2007

PRESENT

Sheila Stoane
Kate Miller
Howard Reid
Katchen Coley
Jane Brawerman
Ellen Lukens
Len Tunderman
Steven Ladd

ABSENT

Norm Zimmer
Len Tunderman
David O'Brien
Jim Fortuna
Nancy Kiniry
Michael Ennis

OTHERS PRESENT

David Bauer
Fred Carroll

A. Call to Order

Chairwoman Sheila Stoane called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm in Room B-20 in the Municipal Building.

B. Roll Call

The roll was called and a quorum was determined.

C. Public Forum

David Bauer suggested that the Conservation Commission develop a policy for the passive use of agriculture on city owned properties; examples of what the policy might contain include guidelines on pesticide use and best management practices; examples of what it might apply to are Millane's tree farm and community gardens; the question was asked about what State and Federal resources might be available. He also mentioned that he was on the Board of Health, and that they are revamping their livestock regulations. The Commission expressed an interest in working with him on this issue (agriculture policy), and asked him to look into models provided by DEP, EPA and CCM.

Fred Carroll who is the Host of the Homeless Report on WESU wanted to know what he and others could do about vines growing on trees along the Connecticut River. A discussion ensued and he was recommended to ask Urban Forestry for help; other recommendations included pinpointing one park and getting the necessary permits to cut the vines.

Election results: Sheila Stoane as Chair; Nancy Kiniry as Vice Chair proposed by James Fortuna and seconded by Katchen Coley. Approved unanimously.

D. Minutes of November 9, 2006

Motion to approve minutes of Nov 9, 2006 as corrected was moved by Norm Zimmer and seconded by Ellen Lukens. Nancy Kiniry and Michael Ennis abstained.

E. Old Business

1. Trail Guide

Sheila Stoane will get estimates for printing more trail guides. Trail guide still not accessible on the City's website. Jane Brawerman offered to assist Michiel in linking PDF to site.

2. Public Relations – Conservation Corner

Katchen Coley is writing for the February issue re: legislative session. Ellen will write about Bioblitz for the March issue.

3. Open Space Committee

Bill made offers on the Lamentation MT properties.

The City closed on Salafia, Daniels, Weston and Flemming properties.

We will go into executive session to discuss other property at the end of the meeting.

Coginchaug River Community Forum Monday Jan 29th 7-9PM at CFPA in Middlefield.
Community Forum to inform public about project.

Vote in favor of entering executive session.

Vote in favor of leaving executive session.

Vote in favor of authorizing Ellen L. to pursue activities re: acquisition of development rights and/or property at Merriam Tree Farms (Question? Part of Executive Session or afterwards?).

4. Open-Space Signs

There was a discussion and the item was tabled pending finding the trail markers

5. Bio Blitz

Ellen Lukens reported. Being held 3pm 6/8 and 10-4 Saturday 6/9 and will include displays, walks and tours for the public.

7. Other

Environmental Buying Guide: Kate would like more suggestions. Please e-mail them to her.

F. New Business

Adding accessibility to public to open space criteria – brought up last time by Kate M.; interest expressed by Monica B. at Jonah Center meeting re: open space. Open space subcommittee will discuss and make recommendations at the next meeting.

National Recreational Trails Program brought up by Sheila S. Moved and seconded that we should apply for the grant due 3/1/07 (that Sheila S. is empowered to speak to Bill W. about applying). Ellen L. and Katchen C. will assist in follow up. Suggested parcels: Tynan and Plumb. Try for a handicapped access.

Kate Miller circulated draft letter to Mayor about application to DEP for Pilot Project re: Organic Land Care; unanimous vote to send letter signed by Sheila S. on behalf on Commission with edits by Ellen L. and Jane B.

Authorized Sheila S. to speak to the Common Council regarding Landmark Development Corp's plans to develop a big box store in downtown Middletown. Draft language worked out to address three points – concern over developer's history of environmental violation, use of highway dollars that might have been used to better connect downtown with Harbor Park, store block of river view.

Ellen L. spoke of Rep. Gail Hamm's interest in protecting the CVH watershed. Will draft letter from Conservation supporting legislation transferring CVH watershed properties from DMH to DEP.

Member Forum: Finding funding sources for farms.

G. Correspondence

H. Member Forum

I. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:10 PM. Approved unanimously.